

## **Current Forecasts and the Importance of Planning**

BEFORE I TALK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING, I WANT TO ADDRESS A RECENT SITUATION INVOLVING THE DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES—NAMELY, A SECURITY BREACH THAT AFFECTED CLIENTS OF OUR HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES. ON OCTOBER 25<sup>TH</sup>, A SEASONED AND WELL INTENTIONED EMPLOYEE HAD A LAPTOP STOLEN WHILE ON AN APPROVED BUSINESS TRIP. UNFORTUNATELY, THE LAPTOP CONTAINED A LARGE DATABASE WITH INFORMATION ON CLIENTS—INCLUDING NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE, DATE OF BIRTH, AND FOR SOME THEIR 9-DIGIT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER. WE HAD CONVERTED TO USING A 4-DIGIT NUMBER MORE THAN A YEAR AGO, BUT THE FILE BEING USED INCLUDED DATA GOING BACK TO 2007. WHILE THE EMPLOYEE WAS CERTAINLY AUTHORIZED TO ACCESS THESE DATA FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES, BAD JUDGMENT WAS USED IN HAVING THE DATA ON THE LAPTOP AND APPROPRIATE DISCIPLINARY ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE EMPLOYEE ACTED VERY RESPONSIBLY IN NOTIFYING ALL APPROPRIATE PARTIES, INCLUDING LAW ENFORCEMENT, AS SOON AS DISCOVERING THE LOSS OF THE COMPUTER. WE ARE CONTINUING TO WORK WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT, INCLUDING THE SBI, IN AN EFFORT TO RECOVER THE COMPUTER. MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE HAVE TAKEN SIGNIFICANT ACTION TO NOTIFY ALL AFFECTED CLIENTS AND ASSIST THEM WITH TAKING PROTECTIVE STEPS TO GUARD AGAINST WRONGFUL USE OF THE DATA. I WANT TO SAY A SPECIAL THANKS TO

OUR DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE OF CITIZEN SERVICES (CARE-LINE), THE AREA AGENCIES ON AGING, THE LOCAL AGING NETWORK, AND THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE FOR THEIR HELP. AND I CAN ASSURE YOU ALSO THAT WE HAVE TAKEN STEPS TO AVOID ANY FUTURE SECURITY BREACHES.

I SEE A PARALLEL OF SORTS WITH WHAT YOU ASKED ME TO TALK ABOUT TODAY—THE AGING OF OUR POPULATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING FOR THIS DEMOGRAPHIC SHIFT. I HAVE REMINDED MYSELF OVER THE PAST FEW WEEKS THAT *"IT IS NOT AS MUCH ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IN LIFE, BUT WHAT YOU DO WITH WHAT HAPPENS."* THE MOST FRUSTRATING PART OF THIS SECURITY INCIDENT FOR ME IS IN NOT REALLY KNOWING WHAT HAS HAPPENED WITH THE COMPUTER—IS IT IN A DUMPSTER OR IN THE HANDS OF SOMEONE WHO WILL MISUSE IT? THE DIFFERENCE IS ENORMOUS IN TERMS OF POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCE, AND WE HAVE HAD TO RESPOND TO THE RISK.

SIMILARLY, WE ALL KNOW ABOUT THE AGING OF OUR STATE'S POPULATION. YOU HAVE HEARD ME TALK ABOUT IT BEFORE WITH MY POWERPOINT SLIDES...YOU READ ABOUT IT IN OUR REPORT ADVOCATING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF AGING IN NORTH CAROLINA...AND YOU WILL PROBABLY HEAR ABOUT IT AGAIN FROM OTHER SPEAKERS TODAY. BUT THE POINT IS—WHILE WE ARE AWARE THAT NORTH CAROLINA IS AGING, DO WE HAVE SUFFICIENT KNOWLEDGE TO

UNDERSTAND ITS IMPLICATIONS, DO WE REALLY KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO KNOW, AND DO WE KNOW WHO IS DOING WHAT TO PREPARE FOR IT?

LAST YEAR YOU URGED INTRODUCTION OF BILLS IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO FUND A COMPREHENSIVE FIVE-YEAR STATEWIDE STUDY OF OUR STATE'S READINESS TO RESPOND TO THE COMING WAVE OF OLDER ADULTS. THE BILLS REFERENCED COMPELLING DEMOGRAPHICS FOR SUCH A STUDY:

TODAY 28 COUNTIES HAVE MORE PERSONS AGE 60 AND OLDER THAN AGE 17 AND YOUNGER—BY 2030, THIS IS PROJECTED FOR 75 COUNTIES; AND

BETWEEN 2000 AND 2030, POPULATION GROWTH FOR THE STATE AS A WHOLE IS PROJECTED AT 52.5%, WHILE THE POPULATION 65 AND OLDER IS EXPECTED TO GROW 123%, AND THOSE 85 AND OLDER BY 146%.

BUT AGAIN, LIKE THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE COMPUTER'S WHEREABOUTS—WHILE WE KNOW OUR POPULATION IS AGING—DO WE REALLY KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH OUR POPULATION AND HOW WE ARE AND SHOULD BE PREPARING FOR THIS CHANGE? FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK WE KNOW NEARLY ENOUGH.

WE ARE CURRENTLY PREPARING THE 2009 AGING PROFILE THAT WE ANNUALLY PROVIDE THE COMMISSION. IT WILL HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE DIVERSITY AND DISPARITY THAT WE SEE

AMONG THE OLDER POPULATION IN TERMS OF SUCH VARIABLES AS GENDER, MARITAL STATUS, ETHNICITY AND RACE, RESIDENCE AND RURALITY, DISABILITY AND HEALTH STATUS, AND INCOME, EDUCATION AND WORK STATUS. BUT I HASTEN TO ADD THAT OUR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE AGING POPULATION IS LIMITED, AND THUS THE INFORMATION WE SHARE FOR POLICY MAKERS, PROGRAMS, AND PRACTICE IS INADEQUATE. AND I DOUBT THAT A RICHER BODY OF INFORMATION IS BEING USED BY AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS—PUBLIC AND PRIVATE—STATE AND LOCAL.

I HOPE THAT I AM WRONG...AND THAT IN FACT, AGING IS HIGH ON THE RADAR SCREEN AND PRIORITY LISTS OF ALL RELEVANT AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS. OCCASIONALLY I GET ENCOURAGED—LIKE THIS PAST WEEK WHEN I RECEIVED MY NEWSLETTER FROM THE STATE CREDIT UNION AND LEARNED THAT THEY ARE NOW OFFERING “REVERSE MORTGAGES” AS A NEW PRODUCT. OF COURSE, REVERSE MORTGAGES HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR QUITE SOME TIME AND CERTAINLY ARE NOT FOR EVERYONE, BUT IT IS A GOOD SIGN.

STILL, I QUESTION WHETHER AGING IS BEING SEEN BY POLICYMAKERS AND EXECUTIVES AS A MAJOR FUTURE DRIVING FORCE THAT IT SURELY MUST BE.

A NATIONAL REPORT: *THE MATURING OF AMERICA: GETTING COMMUNITIES ON TRACK FOR AN AGING POPULATION* CITED THAT “ONLY 46 PERCENT OF AMERICAN COMMUNITIES HAVE STARTED ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE RAPIDLY INCREASING AGING POPULATION.”—IT’S ABOUT THE SAME PERCENTAGE IN NORTH CAROLINA—AT LEAST AMONG THOSE THAT RESPONDED. AMONG THE 278 LOCAL GOVERNMENTS IN NORTH CAROLINA CONTACTED FOR THIS NATIONAL SURVEY, ONLY 33 (OR 18%) OF THE CITIES AND TOWNS PARTICIPATED, AS DID 31 COUNTIES. THE TWO PRESENTING TODAY WERE AMONG THOSE WHO DID.

THERE CONTINUES TO BE A LACK OF AWARENESS AND SENSITIVITY TO THE AGING OF OUR POPULATION. THIS WAS EVIDENT IN A RECENT LOCAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SURVEY IN A COUNTY EXPERIENCING A DISPORTIONATE INCREASE IN SENIORS AS COMPARED TO YOUTH. WHILE THE CHAMBER EXPRESSED INTEREST IN REACHING “MORE RETIREE AGE PEOPLE...TO GET A FULL PICTURE OF THE WANTS AND NEEDS OF CITIZENS,” ITS REGIONAL AMENITIES SURVEY HAD VERY FEW QUESTIONS RELEVANT TO OLDER RESIDENTS. FOR EXAMPLE, IN ONE QUESTION ABOUT 38 POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES OF INTEREST TO LOCAL RESIDENTS, NONE RELATED TO SENIOR ACTIVITIES (UNLIKE SOME QUESTIONS TARGETED TOWARD CHILDREN—“BE ACTIVE IN CHILDREN’S

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES,” “COACH CHILDREN’S SPORTS”). IN A QUESTION THAT ASKED HOW THE REGION WAS “AS A PLACE TO LIVE FOR THE FOLLOWING KINDS OF PEOPLE,” NONE OF THE NINE CHOICES TARGETED OLDER ADULTS (CHOICES INCLUDED: RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES LOOKING INTO THE JOB MARKET; YOUNG, SINGLE PEOPLE; FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN, ETC.) IT IS ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT THE QUESTION ABOUT THE RESPONDENT’S AGE GAVE FOUR AGE GROUPS BETWEEN 20 AND 54, BUT ONLY ONE FOR THOSE AGE 55 AND OLDER. UNFORTUNATELY, I THINK THIS MINDSET IS COMMON.

THE MATURING OF AMERICA SURVEY CONCLUDED “THAT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS...AS YET DO NOT HAVE THE POLICIES, PROGRAMS OR SERVICES IN PLACE TO PROMOTE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND THE ABILITY OF OLDER ADULTS TO LIVE INDEPENDENTLY AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR COMMUNITIES FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE. THESE SERVICES MIGHT INCLUDE JOB RETRAINING, FLEXTIME AND OTHER JOB ACCOMMODATIONS; HOME CHORE SERVICES, HOME MODIFICATION AND SENIOR-FRIENDLY HOUSING OPTIONS, TAX RELIEF, ROADWAY REDESIGN OR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES TARGETED TO OLDER ADULTS. THE NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS ARE OFTEN INTERRELATED. FOR EXAMPLE,

PROVIDING HOUSING WILL NOT BE SUFFICIENT IF RESIDENTS LACK TRANSPORTATION TO GET TO BASIC SERVICES SUCH AS MEDICAL OFFICES, THE PHARMACY OR GROCERY STORE. THESE INTERDEPENDENT NEEDS OF OLDER ADULTS MAY REQUIRE A COMPLETELY NEW COMPREHENSIVE, HOLISTIC APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT. AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES NEED TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT THEIR EXISTING POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO SEE IF THEY ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF AN AGING POPULATION. THOSE COMMUNITIES WHO HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO TEST THEIR 'AGING READINESS' ARE NOW REACHING OUT TO THEIR OLDER CITIZENS TO ENGAGE THEM IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT WHAT CHANGES TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES MAY BE NEEDED TO ENHANCE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE AND ENSURE THAT THEY CAN GROW OLD SUCCESSFULLY IN THE COMMUNITY." WE ARE FORTUNATE TODAY TO BE HEARING ABOUT THE WORK OF TWO LOCAL COMMUNITIES—THE TOWN OF DAVIDSON AND ASHE COUNTY WHO ARE TAKING AGING SERIOUSLY. AT THE RECENT NC CONFERENCE ON AGING WE RECOGNIZED ANOTHER SUCH COMMUNITY—BUNCOMBE COUNTY AND ITS AGING COALITION—FOR THEIR SIMILAR EFFORTS. IN PRESENTING THEM WITH THE ERNEST B. MESSER AWARD (A FORMER LEADER FOR AGING IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY), WE

NOTED THAT MORE THAN 500 INDIVIDUALS HAD PARTICIPATED IN LOCAL PLANNING TO IDENTIFY WAYS THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS COULD BETTER WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF THE COUNTY'S SENIORS. AND WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?—HERE'S ONE REASON—MORE THAN HALF OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY'S POPULATION ARE BOOMERS OR OLDER.

WHILE I FEEL WE ARE MAKING STRIDES IN LOCAL AWARENESS AND PLANNING THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING, LOCAL AGING AGENCIES, AND LOCAL VISIONARIES AND ADVOCATES, I REALLY DON'T KNOW THE EXTENT OR DEPTH OF THIS RESPONSE.

AM I ANY MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT STATE-LEVEL PREPAREDNESS? ...NO, I AM NOT. WHILE I AM ENCOURAGED BY OUR WORK WITH OTHERS IN SUCH AREAS AS OLDER DRIVER SAFETY STRATEGIES, I REALLY DON'T KNOW THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION IS CONSIDERING POPULATION AGING AS A FORCE IN ITS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE. WHILE I AM PLEASED THAT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOLLOWED YOUR LEAD IN REESTABLISHING THE TAX CREDIT FOR THE PURCHASE OF LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE AND IN INCREASING THE HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION FOR SENIOR HOMEOWNERS, I



WONDER ABOUT THE EXTENT TO WHICH OUR DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE AND OTHERS ARE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT POPULATION AGING IN FORECASTING THE IMPLICATIONS OF TODAY'S POLICY DECISIONS ON FUTURE TAX RECEIPTS. WHILE I ACKNOWLEDGE THE INTEREST IN ATTRACTING RETIREE-MIGRANTS AS AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY THROUGH SUCH MEANS AS DESIGNATING CERTIFIED RETIREMENT COMMUNITIES, AS THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO DO BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, I WORRY WHETHER WE REALLY UNDERSTAND THE IMPLICATIONS OF RETIREMENT MIGRATION, ESPECIALLY OVER TIME. WHILE YOU HEARD AT YOUR SEPTEMBER MEETING ABOUT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE ON DISABLED AND ELDERLY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, THE ISSUE NOW IS WHETHER THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED. WHILE I AM PLEASED WITH INDICATIONS THAT NORTH CAROLINA IS ACHIEVING A MORE BALANCED SYSTEM OF LONG-TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS, IT REMAINS TRUE THAT FOR EVERY MEDICAID DOLLAR SPENT ON NURSING HOME CARE, LESS THAN 50 CENTS GOES TO HOME AND COMMUNITY SERVICES...AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, YOU TOO OFTEN HEAR ABOUT HEALTH AND LONG-TERM CARE PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND ISSUES INDEPENDENTLY RATHER THAN AS PART OF AN OVERALL PLAN AND BUDGET. WHILE THE 2009

STATE BUDGET APPROVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY INCLUDES NEARLY \$29.5 MILLION IN PROJECTED STATE SAVINGS DUE TO THE EXPECTED EFFORTS OF COMMUNITY CARE OF NORTH CAROLINA IN MANAGING CHRONIC CARE FOR AGED, BLIND AND DISABLED UNDER MEDICAID—I WONDER WHAT THOUGHTS AND PLANS ARE UNDERWAY FOR USE OF THESE PROJECTED ANNUAL SAVINGS—CAN AND WILL THEY BE USED TO INVEST IN PROGRAMS AND SYSTEM REFORMS—SUCH AS PROJECT C.A.R.E., COMMUNITY RESOURCE CONNECTIONS, NCCARELINK, ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES REFORM, AUTOMATED SCREENING/ASSESSMENT/CARE PLANNING/SERVICE AUTHORIZATION—THAT MIGHT FURTHER THE REALIZATION OF SUCH SAVINGS? WHILE I AM PLEASED THAT THE STUDY COMMISSION AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY ENDORSED THE EFFORTS OF THE DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING TO STUDY AND REPORT ON THE GROWING PREVALENCE OF PERSONS NEEDING SUCH ASSISTANCE, I WONDER HOW WE CAN KEEP THEIR REPORT FROM BECOMING ONE MORE SHELF-DOCUMENT. AND WHILE I WILL BE ANNOYED AGAIN IF I LOOK TO MY LEFT WHEN LEAVING THIS BUILDING TODAY AND GLANCE AT THE INSCRIPTION ON THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION THAT “LEARNING IN OLD AGE IS WRITING IN SAND, BUT LEARNING IN YOUTH IS ENGRAVING ON STONE,” I AM MORE

CONCERNED IN NOT REALLY KNOWING WHAT IS BEING DONE TO STRENGTHEN OPPORTUNITIES FOR LIFELONG LEARNING, NOT ONLY FOR ENRICHMENT BUT ALSO TO ASSURE AN ADEQUATE WORKFORCE WELL INTO THE FUTURE. I COULD OBVIOUSLY GO ON AND ON...

AS EXPRESSED IN A 2006 REPORT OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING: "AN ORGANIZED, INFORMED AND THOUGHTFUL COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS TO PREPARE FOR THE AGING OF THIS NATION'S POPULATION IS NEEDED AT EVERY LEVEL. PREPAREDNESS IS NOT JUST FOR DISASTERS AND EMERGENCIES, BUT SHOULD BE USED TO HELP A COMMUNITY ADAPT TO CHANGING DEMOGRAPHIC NEEDS. 'LIVABLE COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES' REFERS TO PLACES WHERE CITIZENS CAN GROW UP AND GROW OLD WITH MAXIMUM INDEPENDENCE, SAFETY AND WELL-BEING. ALTHOUGH THERE IS MUCH THAT INDIVIDUALS CAN AND SHOULD DO TO MAXIMIZE THEIR INDEPENDENCE AS THEY AGE, PUBLIC POLICY MAKERS MUST MAKE CRITICAL DECISIONS RELATING TO HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES, TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS, AND LAND USE REGULATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT AFFECT THE ABILITY OF AN OLDER ADULT TO LIVE AT HOME AND IN THEIR COMMUNITY. PLANNING MUST NOT OCCUR IN A VACUUM. STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ARE ALREADY

MANDATED TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT LONG-TERM PLANNING IN A VARIETY OF ARENAS, BUT THESE PLANS ARE OFTEN DEVELOPED WITHOUT INPUT AS TO HOW COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE AND BROADER SERVICE SYSTEMS WILL BE IMPACTED BY THE AGING OF THE POPULATION. GIVEN THE MAGNITUDE OF THE AGING OF THIS NATION'S POPULATION, THESE PLANS WILL ONLY BE COST-EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT IF THEY INCORPORATE AGING INTO THE PROCESS. COMMUNITIES NEED TO HAVE SUPPORT TO ENSURE THAT THEIR POLICIES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PROMOTE LIVABLE COMMUNITIES FOR ALL AGES—COMMUNITIES THAT ARE GOOD PLACES TO GROW UP AND TO GROW OLD.”

WHEN OUR DIVISION RECOMMENDED A STATEWIDE AGING STUDY, WE NAMED OUR PROPOSAL—*PROJECT CACE*, THAT IS—COMMUNITIES AND AGING CAROLINIANS—ON EDGE. NAMING IS ALWAYS DIFFICULT...AND SO WE SOON CHANGED THE NAME TO—*NC FACT—NORTH CAROLINA FACING AGING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER*.

EITHER WAY, THE PRINCIPAL MESSAGE REMAINS THE SAME: THE AGING OF OUR POPULATION IS SIGNIFICANT FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES AS WELL AS COMMUNITIES ALL ACROSS THE STATE—IT ALSO IS RELEVANT FOR PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS

AT ALL LEVELS. PREPAREDNESS FOR AGING IS BOTH A PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY, AND AN ASSESSMENT OF PREPAREDNESS MUST INVOLVE BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITIES. BUT IT IS NOT ENOUGH JUST TO ASSESS, WE MUST HAVE THE CAPACITY AND WILL TO RESPOND TO WHAT WE LEARN.

THE FIVE-YEAR APPROACH WE PRESENTED LAST YEAR IS STILL SOUND, AND I APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT OF IT. EACH OF ITS SIX ELEMENTS HAS MERIT ON ITS OWN, AND ESPECIALLY WHEN TAKEN TOGETHER. THESE INCLUDE:

- ❑ CREATING A STATE STRATEGIC AND STEERING TEAM;
- ❑ CONDUCTING A SURVEY TO ASSESS CONSUMER NEEDS, ASSETS, AND EXPECTATIONS;
- ❑ SURVEYING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO ASSESS THEIR AWARENESS, PREPAREDNESS, AND ACTIVITIES;
- ❑ SUPPORTING THE CONDUCT OF SPECIAL STUDIES IN SUCH AREAS AS RETIREMENT MIGRATION;
- ❑ STRENGTHENING THE CAPACITY FOR STATE AND LOCAL PLANNING; AND
- ❑ CREATING AN AGING DATA WAREHOUSE—ONE, I WOULD ADD, THAT HAS MORE THAN ADEQUATE SECURITY FEATURES.

I SUPPOSE THE BASIC QUESTION TODAY, THOUGH, IS NOT SO MUCH WHAT SHOULD BE DONE...BUT WHAT CAN BE DONE? WHILE I WOULD HOPE SOME DAY TO SEE ALL OF THESE ELEMENTS UNDERTAKEN, I AM NOT NAÏVE ABOUT THE PROJECTED REVENUE PICTURE. AS WITH MOST STATE AGENCIES, WE HAVE ALREADY TAKEN STEPS TO PREPARE FOR THE ANTICIPATED SHORTFALL. WHILE WE MUST STRENGTHEN PLANNING AND PREPAREDNESS FOR OUR AGING POPULATION, IF YOU WERE TO ASK ME TO CHOOSE BETWEEN FUNDS FOR THIS PLANNING INITIATIVE OR RECURRING FUNDING FOR PROJECT C.A.R.E.—OUR SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVE THAT SUPPORTS FAMILIES CARING FOR PERSONS WITH ALZHEIMER’S DISEASE—I WOULD PAUSE AND SAY BOTH ARE VITAL—AND THEN AFTER YOUR STERN REMINDER OF THE NEED TO PRIORITIZE, I WOULD CHOOSE THE \$500,000 IN RECURRING FUNDS FOR PROJECT C.A.R.E.

SO THIS, IT SEEMS, IS THE DILEMMA...DO WE CONTINUE THE STATUS QUO AND HOPE THAT AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS ARE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE AGING POPULATION IN THEIR PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING—UNTIL SUCH TIME AS WE CAN INVEST IN SOME OR ALL OF THE ELEMENTS THAT WE HAVE PROPOSED; OR DO WE FIGURE OUT A WAY TO AT LEAST BEGIN?

I PROPOSE A STARTING POINT THAT WILL REQUIRE YOUR ENDORSEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT. IT HAS THREE PARTS.

FIRST, CONSISTENT WITH YOUR STATUTORY MISSION, THE STUDY COMMISSION ON AGING WOULD PETITION DESIGNATED AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO REPORT ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY ARE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING THE AGING OF THE POPULATION IN THEIR POLICY AND PROGRAM PLANNING.

AFFECTED DEPARTMENTS, OFFICES, AND SYSTEMS WOULD LIKELY INCLUDE: ADMINISTRATION, AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES, COMMERCE, COMMUNITY COLLEGES, CORRECTION, CRIME CONTROL AND PUBLIC SAFETY, CULTURAL RESOURCES, EMPLOYMENT SECURITY COMMISSION, ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, HOUSING FINANCE AGENCY, INSURANCE, JUSTICE, LABOR, REVENUE, STATE PERSONNEL, TRANSPORTATION, AND THE UNC SYSTEM. I WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT THE COMMISSION MIGHT INVITE INPUT FROM SUCH ENTITIES AS THE NC CHAMBER, THE NC HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION, THE NC MEDICAL SOCIETY, THE NC SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE, AND THE NC RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CENTER. IN THIS ROLE, THE COMMISSION COULD SERVE AS A CATALYST, CONSTRUCTIVE CRITIC, EVALUATOR, PLANNER, AND FACILITATOR AND SUPPORTER.

THE DIVISION OF AGING AND ADULT SERVICES AND THE UNC INSTITUTE ON AGING COULD COLLABORATE TO PRODUCE THE REPORTING FORMAT AND WORK WITH THE COMMISSION'S STAFF IN PREPARING A SUMMARY REPORT BY AUGUST 2009. I HAVE TALKED WITH DR. VICTOR MARSHALL OF THE INSTITUTE, AND WE ARE BOTH WILLING TO COMMIT EXISTING STAFF TIME TO THIS EFFORT. I AM PROPOSING THE COMMISSION'S LEADERSHIP ON THIS ACTIVITY BECAUSE YOU CAN CREATE A STRONGER RESPONSE FROM STAKEHOLDERS.

SECOND, THE COMMISSION COULD SHARE THE RESULTS OF THIS WORK WITH THE GOVERNOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND ALSO USE THE RESULTS TO HELP SHAPE ITS FUTURE MEETING AGENDAS. YOU MIGHT CONSIDER MEETINGS SUCH AS TODAY'S THAT WOULD INVOLVE MORE INTENSE BRIEFINGS ON SPECIFIC TOPICS IDENTIFIED AS IMPORTANT IN THE REPORT. I WOULD IMAGINE THAT YOU MIGHT WANT TO HEAR DIRECTLY FROM SOME AGENCY DIRECTORS DEPENDING ON THEIR RESPONSES.

THIRD, I WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE COMMISSION CONSIDER ADVOCATING THE RESTORATION OF STATE FUNDING FOR AREA AGENCIES ON AGING TO AT LEAST THE LEVEL THEY HAD IN 2001—THIS WOULD REQUIRE AN ADDITIONAL \$270,000. THIS



Dennis W. Streets, Presentation to Aging Study Commission, November 12, 2008

SUPPORT WOULD ASSIST AAAs IN PROMOTING THE KIND OF CITIZEN-DRIVEN LOCAL PLANNING YOU WILL HEAR MORE ABOUT TODAY.

AGAIN I THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO PRESENT MY THOUGHTS, AND I HOPE THEY ARE HELPFUL AS YOU CONSIDER HOW BEST TO PROCEED.